Eating Together Singapore: The Hawker Centre in the Singapore Story

a talk by Professor Lily Kong

Based on her book on Singapore Hawker Centres, Professor Kong seeks to share her study on how such eating places have become an iconic Singapore landscape and way of life. She intends to map out the development of this social institution, from the early days of street peddlers to the consolidated hawker centres initiated in the late 1960s and early 1970s, to the food courts of the 1980s and 1990s. Together, they highlight the uniqueness of place in crafting Singapore’s landscape identity in the face of the changing global trends.

Professor Lily Kong is Vice President (University and Global Relations) and concurrently the Director of the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore. She sits on several academic and editorial boards internationally, and serves on numerous boards and committees of various Ministries and statutory boards in Singapore. Lily is a social and cultural geographer who has written widely on Singapore’s place histories and identities, religion, popular culture, and cultural industries. Her latest book on which this talk is based traces the socio-economic and cultural developments of hawker centres and street food cultures since the colonial era.